

conclusion tomorrow afternoon and vote on this bill tomorrow afternoon and take up one of the other bills so we can move these bills along. This bill came out of our committee unanimously. We have taken care of most of the amendments in our committee. We will cooperate with you in every way to give you advance notice on the votes. If we can find out the number of amendments that are coming, we might even be able to make arrangements that we would vote early tomorrow morning on the amendments on this bill and just have one vote on the executive calendar.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, through you to the distinguished chairman of the committee, I have spoken to Senator BYRD today, and he may want to give a statement today. But he has indicated he certainly does tomorrow. He and I have talked. There are a number of people who at this stage have not indicated they want to offer amendments, but they do wish to make statements on this very important bill. At this stage there are four or five Senators wishing to do that. That will take a little bit of time in the morning but should not take a lot of time. I only know of four or five. And as soon as I learn about amendments, I will certainly let the distinguished ranking member know about those amendments.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2004

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to the consideration of H.R. 2658, which the clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 2658) making appropriations for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2004, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The distinguished Senator from Alaska is recognized.

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, it is my privilege and honor once again to present to the Senate the Defense appropriations bill for fiscal year 2004. This bill reflects a bipartisan approach that Senator INOUE and I have tried to maintain during the time we have served together on the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee. It is always a great pleasure for me to work with him and with his staff member Charlie Houy. We believe we have a bill that will meet the approval of the Senate with very few amendments.

This bill was reported out of the full Appropriations Committee on July 9 by a unanimous vote; 29 Senators voted in favor of it and no Senator objected to

it. We have sought to recommend a balanced bill to the Senate. We believe it addresses the key requirements for readiness, quality of life, and the reconstitution of our military force.

While we are debating this bill on the floor today, there are hundreds of thousands of men and women in uniform forward deployed and serving our country abroad. They are performing superbly and we are proud of what they are accomplishing.

The Department of Defense now faces three critical and often competing challenges:

First, conducting simultaneous combat and near-combat operations in numerous theaters at the same time—Iraq, Afghanistan, Bosnia, and Kosovo, to name a few. We have forces spread throughout the world, deployed in more areas and in more strange circumstances than at any time in the history of this country;

Secondly, keeping the readiness of this force at high levels, ready to respond when called upon to carry out the global war on terrorism, is another great challenge;

Lastly, transforming the Department to meet future challenges. We must ensure that our military forces are ready to meet whatever lies ahead as we move through the 21st century.

Transformation is necessary to ensure that U.S. forces continue to operate from a position of overwhelming military advantage.

Transformed forces are also essential for deterring conflict, dissuading adversaries, and assuring others of our commitment to a peaceful world.

This bill Senator INOUE and I present today reflects a prudent balance among all three of these challenges. It recommends \$368.6 billion in discretionary budget authority programs for the Department of Defense. This is \$3.2 billion below the President's request but within our 302(b) allocations for the Defense subcommittee.

As the Senate will recall, we completed action on a \$62.6 billion Iraq supplemental appropriations bill for the Department of Defense in mid-April. This bill rescinds \$3.157 billion of those supplemental funds that are not currently required by the Department.

This measure is fully consistent with both the objectives of the administration and the Senate-passed 2004 National Defense authorization bill.

It honors the commitments we have to our Armed Forces. It helps ensure that they will continue to have good leadership, first-rate training, modernized equipment, and quality infrastructure. It also fully funds key readiness programs critical to the global war on terrorism.

These recommendations will make continued progress in supporting our military personnel, their families, and modernizing the force. As always, those are our first priorities.

In highlighting several of the key initiatives, I note the following:

This bill funds an average military pay raise of 4.15 percent and provides \$210 million to fund increases in family separation allowances and imminent danger pay.

It does not recommend consolidation of Guard and Reserve personnel appropriations with their respective active component appropriations.

For the Army, it is additional funding for their transformation initiative—the Stryker brigade combat teams.

For the Navy, additional submarine refuelings, advance procurement of LPD-23, and fully funding the last increment of the LHD-8.

For the Air Force, it is fully funding the C-17 aircraft and funding acquisition of 22 F-22 Raptor aircraft.

In light of the contributions of the Guard and Reserve forces and deployments to the Balkans, Afghanistan, and Iraq, this bill adds \$700 million of nondesignated equipment funding—specifically for the Reserve components.

The proposal before the Senate funds the President's request for missile defense.

Finally, let me once again thank my cochairman, Senator INOUE, for his support and friendship and invaluable counsel on this bill. I urge the Chair to recognize him for any statement he wishes to make.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii is recognized.

Mr. INOUE. Mr. President, I rise to express my very strong support for this measure. The committee has produced a bipartisan bill which reflects well on the committee and on the Senate.

It has often been said that foreign policy debates should stop at the water's edge. This bill holds true to that principle. This bill provides for our Nation's defense without letting politics drive the recommendations.

I commend our chairman, the Senator from Alaska, for the bill being brought to the Senate this afternoon. This important measure provides the spending necessary for the Defense Department for fiscal year 2004. The total in the bill is about \$369 billion, as noted by the chairman. It is \$3.2 billion below the amount requested by the President, but it is the same as the subcommittee's 302(b) allocation.

Mr. President, I don't intend to reiterate all of the details the chairman has outlined. Suffice it to say that the bill fully funds our military personnel programs, including the authorized pay raise. It provides sufficient funding to meet our readiness requirements for the coming year, and it also increases funding for DOD's critical transformation programs.

I wish to inform all of my colleagues that consistent with the administration's request, no funds are included in this bill for the ongoing operations in Afghanistan and Iraq.

A portion of the fiscal year 2003 supplemental funds provided this year will remain available in the coming year to help offset these needs. But I believe it